

and found their greatest pleasure in it.¹ Under Nero women fought in the arena. This was forbidden under Severus. A law, probably of the time of Nero, forbade masters to give their slaves to fight beasts. Hadrian forbade the sale of slaves to be gladiators. Marcus Aurelius forbade the condemnation of criminals to be gladiators, and he tried to limit the gladiatorial exhibitions. They were far too popular.² It is thus that amusements and mores react on each other to produce social degeneration. The whole social standard of "right" moves down with the moral degeneracy, and at no stage is there a sense of shame or wrongdoing in the public mind in connection with what is customary and traditional at the time. There is no contrast between facts and standards. The great Christian ecclesiastics of the fourth and fifth centuries denounced the public amusements and tried to keep the Christians away from them. They tried to convert actors. They pointed out the subtle corruption of character produced by feigning vice. Gladiators were not admitted to baptism unless they repented and renounced their profession.³ In 325 Constantine forbade gladiatorial combats as unfit for a time of peace. He forbade the use of condemned criminals in the arena. These laws were powerless.⁴

641. Compromise between church and customs. The *maïuma* (mock sea fight on the Tiber in May) was forbidden, probably under Constance, a prohibition which was repeated by Theodosius. Arcadius tried to allow it again, under conditions that propriety be observed, but it was impossible, and he forbade all immodest exhibitions. Theodosius forbade magistrates to be present at exhibitions after midday, when the

most obscene
 and bloody were presented, except on the
 anniversaries of his
 own birth and accession. He also forbade actresses
 to use fine
 clothes and jewels, and forbade Christians to be
 actors. Leo I
 (f 461) forbade that any Christian woman, free or
 slave, should
 be compelled to be an actress or meretrix.⁵
 Salvianus describes,⁶

¹ Grupp, *Kultugesch* der rom. Kaiserzeit*, I, 200.

² Magnin, *Origines*, 435.

* *IMd* ^ 469.

⁸ Schmidt, 251-253.

⁵ *Ibid* 451, 466, 477.

⁶ *De Gubernat. Dei*, VI, 10, 15, 38, 44-55.